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## MORE TAX FREEDOM IN HOUSING PLANNED

Lockwood Committee to Ask  
Extension of Time Limit  
Up April 1, 1922.

## BIG AID TO CONSTRUCTION

Elimination of Levy on New  
Building Brings \$200,000-  
000 Work in This City.

The time limit, at present set for April 1, 1922, before which housing construction must be begun if owners are to enjoy the tax exemption provision allowed by the Board of Aldermen, for which Borough President Henry H. Curran of Manhattan was mainly responsible, may be extended one or two years if plans of the Lockwood legislative committee on housing are put into effect. The Curran resolution provided for the exemption for ten years of all dwelling construction begun before April 1 next and completed within the ensuing eighteen months.

The suggested modification of this provision will not permit of tax exemptions beyond 1932, but will extend the time within which such construction must begin for at least one or possibly two years. Legislation authorizing the city to grant this additional relief to housing contractors will probably be introduced at the next session of the Legislature.

This move was tentatively decided upon at an informal session of the Lockwood committee at City Hall yesterday as a further stimulant to building.

In addition, to cope with possible further profiteering in leases, the suggestion is under consideration to recommend an extension of the rent laws limiting a landlord's annual increase, provided the constitutionality of the laws is upheld when it is tested before the United States Supreme Court in the near future.

These laws have been upheld by the State Court of Appeals, and in the argument before the Supreme Court William D. Guthrie, who drew the tax exemption law, and Julius Henry Cohen will appear in support of the laws.

State Senator Charles C. Lockwood, chairman of the housing committee, commenting on the suggestion for further stimulation of housing construction said:

"More than \$200,000,000 worth of houses have been built or planned in New York city alone since the adoption of the tax exemption ordinance last February. This is by far larger than in any community in the United States, showing that the tax exemption law has been the great stimulant."

Resumption of the Lockwood committee's public hearings may have to be delayed, it was learned, owing to the temporary indisposition of Samuel Untermyer, volunteer counsel. It was planned to reopen the hearings next Tuesday, but Mr. Untermyer's condition, while not a matter for alarm, may compel a postponement for a week. He is to undergo a slight operation to-day on his nose and tonsils.

## UNTERMYER URGES TRANSIT FIGHT MOVE

Asks 3 Organizations to Join  
in Investigation.

In a letter last night to the Merchants' Association, the City Club and the Citizens Union, Samuel Untermyer urged the three organizations to fight for an amendment to the transit law which would give the city a standing in the transit investigation, with the right to cross-examine and produce witnesses and the right to be heard on all questions affecting the value of property.

Mr. Untermyer also urges each organization to appoint three members as a committee to look after the transit situation as it develops during the investigation, with such cooperation as possible from the city authorities. This committee, Mr. Untermyer believes, should apply to the Transit Commission for leave to participate in the proceedings in every stage.

## ASKS FOR READJUSTMENT TO RELIEVE TRAFFIC JAM

Continued from First Page.

the business men there can be a great increase in the decency and comfort in which people are carried to and from their homes."

"In the absence of any material relief in the shape of further facilities some time ahead," interpolated Chairman McAneny, "the adoption of something of this kind will be almost imperative."

Charted curves drafted from traffic figures for every year since 1905 showed that, notwithstanding superior facilities afforded by the subway lines as shown in their use during that period, an increasing number of passengers still use the surface and elevated lines, though the chart indicated the decided preference of the public for the use of the subways. In the whole city the use of surface roads now amounts to approximately 40 per cent. of the entire traveling facilities.

**Danger Seen by McAneny.**

"This indicated," Chairman McAneny suggested, "what would happen to the convenience of more than 300,000,000 passengers a year if the suggestion were carried out to 'junk' all these surface lines."

Frederick W. Lindars, the commission's chief accountant, recalled to the witness chair, was the only other witness of the day. He produced tabulations and studies of revenues and operating costs of all the lines in the city. He dissected the nickel and showed just how it is absorbed. When he had finished the operation there was not enough left of the nickel whereby to identify a hair of the buffalo's mane.

He demonstrated from company reports that a combination of all city lines it actually cost 6.43 cents during the fiscal year 1921 to carry each passenger. Then the expert showed just how the present cost of 6.43 cents is made up. For operating expenses there goes 4.3 of it; for taxes, 0.30; for interest, 1.05; for rentals, 0.65; and for other fixed charges, 0.13.

Mr. Shearn said these figures were produced to show just what becomes of the passenger's nickel and to set at rest the controversy whether certain lines are paying concerns.

For all the roads taken into combination the total figures were shown to be: 1915 and 1916, 4.78; 1917, 4.95; 1918, 5.19; 1919, 5.91; 1920, 6.12; and 1921, 6.43.

On some of the individual groups or systems expenses in cents per revenue passenger carried were found to be:

Interborough subway, 5.36; Interborough elevated, 6.89; Manhattan surface, 2.57; Bronx surface, 5.37; New York Consolidated, subway and elevated, 6.45; Brooklyn surface, 5.98; Queens surface, 7.07; and Richmond surface, 9.40.

On the Interborough subway lines operating costs, not including interest, rents or taxes, amounted to 3.41 cents per revenue passenger carried in 1921, but total costs were brought to 5.36 by other charges, chiefly interest. Mr. Shearn explained that the great interest charge came in 1919, when the company had to begin paying interest on its \$18,000,000 three year 7 per cent. notes. It was the borrowing of this money, with consequent interest charges, that brought the expense for each person carried in excess of 5 cents.

Somewhat similar conditions were shown for other systems. The figures, however, disclosed that on the Manhattan, Queens and Richmond surface lines operating costs alone were now in excess of 5 cents for each passenger carried.

It appeared also that in these figures no account was taken of the city's investment in subways. "In other words," as Mr. Shearn expressed it, "there is \$10,000,000 that the city contributes by way of taxes every year to enable these subways to operate, and that item is not included in these operating expenses."

"That \$10,000,000, of course," remarked the chairman, "covers both the Interborough and Brooklyn subways. But, as about a billion passengers were carried on the city owned subways of the two companies last year, that \$10,000,000 of interest represents almost exactly one cent superimposed upon the cost of carrying each passenger, a cent which does not appear in the operating or interest charges as shown in these figures. This would make the actual cost of

carrying each passenger on the I. R. T. subways in 1921 6.58 cents instead of 5.36, and upon the B. R. T. subways 7.45 instead of 6.45 cents.

**Summary of Four Years Work.**

This tabulation by Mr. Lindars was characterized by Chairman McAneny as "the most illuminating document on the subject of costs that we have had before us at any time." Mr. Shearn explained that it is the summary of careful work that has been carried on through the last four months.

Least it might be thought that the demonstrated inadequacy of the nickel fare shadows an increased fare, however, Mr. McAneny called attention to the fact that it is contemplated to effect such economies in the proposed unified system as to make the five cent fare sufficient to enable the operating companies to meet all obligations. As indicated in the commission's preliminary report, if the reorganization plan be adopted these economies may be effected largely by a rearrangement and more effective coordination of the transit system; reduction of interest and rental charges that it has in view; the elimination of taxes and other public charges, from which the municipalized lines naturally would be free, and the reductions of cost effected through consolidation of power plants and other facilities to be used in common.

With Mr. Lindars still testifying, much of the afternoon session was devoted to showing the enormous increase during recent years in the cost of labor and practically of all materials, including fuel, which enter into operating costs. Largely as a result of these swollen costs the aggregate corporate deficit for all the city lines for 1921 was \$16,906,220.90.

"That," said Mr. Shearn, "is the deficit that the unified system has accumulated in the face of which must be overcome by the economies and other benefits of consolidation."

The deficit has been increasing for the last three years. All these figures entirely exclude interest on the city's subway investment.

But there were a few bright spots in the picture after all. It was brought out that coal contracts for the current fiscal year, which have just been approved by the commission at \$6.36 a ton, will save to the I. R. T. and the B. R. T. \$1,200,000, as compared with last year's fuel charges. The chairman added that this coal economy follows a saving of \$5,000,000 coming from adjustment of wage scales under last year's schedules. As indicating the growth of fuel bills alone, it was shown that while the Interborough in 1914 spent for coal \$1,450,174, its coal bill for 1921 was \$5,564,571. Figures for the B. R. T. were \$1,119,105, as compared with \$2,900,404.

The examination will proceed this morning. It is expected that the first of the Interborough's officers will be interrogated to-day.

## PEGGY MARSH MIXED UP IN ROW IN HOTEL

Her Husband, Albert Johnson,  
Is Accused of Assault by a  
Woman Guest.

## ACTRESS DENIES CHARGE

Case Involves Card Party and  
Alleged Slaps, Kicks and  
Loss of Candy.

The one thing that Albert L. Johnson and Peggy Marsh, his wife, the actress who has been engaged in litigation with the Marshall Field estate, and Miss Mary Daly, a guest at the Great Northern Hotel, agreed on yesterday in West Side Court was that there was an acrimonious discussion in voices perhaps a bit louder than a whisper in Miss Daly's room shortly before 2 o'clock Tuesday morning.

Accordingly to Miss Daly, most of the noise was made by Mr. Johnson, who, she said, kicked, slapped and swore at her, tore her telephone off the wall and threw a good two pound box of candy out of the window. Mr. Johnson, who is a nephew of the late Mayor Tom Johnson of Cleveland, has not had his day in court yet on Miss Daly's charge of assault, but he denies the kicking, slapping, tearing and throwing in toto. So does Miss Marsh, who, according to Miss Daly, seated herself in a chair and smoked a cigarette with philosophic calm during the whole proceedings.

Johnson, a tall young man of 36 years, was arrested Tuesday on Miss Daly's complaint of simple assault, by Warrant Officer Fisher. At the West Sixty-eighth street station he put up \$500 bail, and yesterday he was arraigned on the charge.

Miss Daly, who is a buyer for a Canadian merchants' bureau, said that Johnson, Peggy Marsh and two men unknown to her walked into her apartment at the Great Northern at 2 A. M. Tuesday, just as she and Miss Grace Boutelle, a friend with whom she had a late supper, were retiring. She said she had complained several times about "wild parties" in the Johnson suite during the morning hours and the Johnsons had heard about it.

The kicking, slapping, &c., then ensued, according to Miss Daly, who exhibited in court a bruised face, and told Magistrate Corrigan her shins were

buried where Johnson had kicked her. Although Johnson denied the charges Assistant District Attorney Richard Gibbs asked the court for substantial bail when the hearing was adjourned until to-morrow. He said:

"This case reveals a brutal and unprovoked assault upon a woman at 2 o'clock in the morning in a respectable hotel. I am informed that the defendant has figured in similar escapades in the past and that this is not his first attack upon a woman."

The Johnson version of the affair is that the party of four, Johnson, Peggy Marsh and the two men, were playing cards in the Johnson suite at 2 in the morning when there was a knock at the door. Johnson opened it in time to see a woman in negligee fleeing down the hall. The game was resumed. Another knock came, and this time Peggy Marsh jumped up. She saw two women running down the hall, and pursued them, followed by the others. The chase ended in Miss Daly's room.

"What are you doing, playing tag?" the Johnson party asked. Miss Daly herself, they allege, tore the telephone from its place when Johnson went to the telephone to call the manager.

"Miss Daly has told her story," Mrs. Johnson said yesterday at the hotel. "On Friday we will tell ours. The management has certainly not said anything to us about the affair."

Miss Daly has left the hotel, but, according to the hotel management, may return. The Johnsons have made their home at the Great Northern since their marriage last January. Mr. Johnson shortly after the marriage, which was secretly performed at Greenwich, Conn., said that the contest to secure part of the Field estate for Henry Anthony Marsh, the 4-year-old son of Peggy Marsh, would go on. The boy's father was the late Henry Field 2d.

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